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TAGS: [PREL](#) [CU](#) [EZ](#)
SUBJECT: CZECH FM SCHWARZENBERG AND SPANISH FM MORATINOS
MEET ON CUBA; NO PROGRESS MADE

REF: PRAGUE 531

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Mike Dodman
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[11](#). (C/NF) The Czech Government has not yet decided whether it will stand its ground on EU Cuban common policy at the June GAERC, and block the lifting of the "June measures." Complicating the decision is the rumor that the Castro regime might release some political prisoners if the measures are lifted. Czech FM Karel Schwarzenberg will make the decision on the Czech position as early as next week. End summary.

[12](#). (U) Poloff met with the Czech MFA Director of Americas Department Jakub Skalnik on May 22 to discuss the meeting on Cuba between Czech FM Karel Schwarzenberg and Spanish FM Miguel Moratinos on May 21 on the margins of the OSCE summit in Prague. According to Skalnik the private discussion between the ministers was a polite but "tough" debate on the proper approach to Cuba. No agreement was reached.

[13](#). (SBU) Skalnik said that at the lunch that followed the ministers' meeting, FM Moratinos described his visit to Havana. FM Moratinos said Raul Castro told him that Fidel will not return to power, and that he, Raul, will stay in power for only a short period (the Czech MFA is skeptical of this claim). Raul further explained that during his time in office, he plans to make economic changes and encourage foreign investment. He also wants to normalize relations with the EU and United States, and is therefore willing to engage in discussions on human rights and the issue of political prisoners. According to FM Moratinos, the Cubans see lifting the June measures as a good faith commitment toward normalization on the part of the EU.

[14](#). (C/NF) Moratinos hinted that Cuba may release some political prisoners in exchange for lifting the measures. According to Skalnik, the possibility that political prisoners could be released has persuaded some EU member states to vote in favor of lifting the measures. The possibility of release has made it difficult for the Czech government to take the principled stand of opposing the abolition of the measures. Skalnik said the Czechs are therefore considering the possibility of a "tough compromise," such as agreeing to extend the suspension of the measures for another year.

[15](#). (C) FM Schwarzenberg has not yet decided what the Czech position on the measures will be. Skalnik believes the decision may be made as early as the week of June 4.

[16](#). (C) Comment. Post has learned that U.S. Cuba Transition Coordinator Caleb McCarry may visit Prague in June. A meeting between McCarry and FM Schwarzenberg before the June GAERC meeting could positively influence the Czech government's

decision on this important issue.
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